*Revelation teaches*

# God in absolute control

By WILLIAM L. TRIMYER

Lesson for May 18, 1980
Scripture References: Revelation 4:1 to 5:14; 7:9-14
Focal Passages: Revelation 5:11-14; 7:9-14
**The Sovereignty of God** (Rev. 4:1-11)

A uniqueness of the Revelation is the manner in which it reveals the awesome greatness and power of God. In our lesson this week we will consider the worthiness of our worship and adoration of God our Creator and sovereign Lord.

The opening lines of Chapter 4 tell of John's vision of a heavenly throne. In fact, the throne is the first thing that catches John's eye. This suggests that the first thing to be known about heaven is that the God who dwells there possesses absolute authority over the universe. Such authority would overshadow even the earthly authority of wicked emperors like Domition, who declared himself to be "Lord and God."

The picture of the throne and the elders surrounding it suggests that Christians may find comfort in the fact that God is in control, and that he is due our honor and worship. Who the elders are around the throne is not as important as what they do, namely, worship the Lord.

Unlike the earlier chapters 2 and 3, chapter 4 is almost dominated by the picture of Christ as the slain Lamb of God. John describes the Redeemer as the One in whom lies every hope of human salvation and future Kingdom of Justice.

**The Conquering Christ** (Rev. 5:5-14)

We are aware that the early Jews awaited a Messiah who would come to rule with an "iron fist." The hope was for a Messiah who could lead the nation into triumphant victory over its enemies. In the opening lines of the fifth chapter we see John grieving over the fact that there didn't seem to be anyone worthy enough to open the sacred scroll. But one of the elders announced that "the Lion of the tribe of Judah...has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals."

The Old and New Testaments present a contrasting view of the Messiah. In the Old Testament the hoped for Messiah would be lion-like, following the vein of King David. But in the New Testament Jesus is introduced by John as "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." Jesus, however, was both lion and lamb. He became the sacrificial lamb for the sins of the world and would reveal himself as the lion of defense for those who dared to follow him.

## The Bible and daily living

In John's vision this Lion-Lamb is worshipped and praised as the Great Redeemer. Christ was seen as the Great Deliverer and Liberator of all humanity and nature. The Revelation is a moving pageant in honor of the Great Messiah.

**The Safety Of The Believers** (Rev. 7:9-14)

People are the focus of God's ultimate concern. His overall plan for the ages includes the redemption of the righteous from the forces of evil. Chapter 6 describes the horrors brought upon the earth with the opening of each seal. Chapter 7, however, reveals the restraint of God towards those who belong to him.

God cares deeply for his people. We are each precious in his sight regardless of color or position in life. The scene that is painted in the Revelation is of unnumbered people gathered from all nations. These have endured the troubles and distresses of the earth and are now residents in God's House. They now offer their praise and thanksgiving for their deliverance from the terrible trials inflicted upon them while on earth. Together with the host in heaven they sing honor and praises to God their Great Deliverer.

The Revelation has a message that is not always easy to comprehend. Its primary message is the ultimate triumph of God over the forces of evil and corruption. It is indeed a book with a message of hope.

Dr. Trimyer is pastor of Elon Baptist Church in Pamplin, Va.


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## Train up a child in the way he should go...

"Train up a child in the way he should go . . ."

Quite a few parents around here are what I might call "hard/soft." What I mean by that is that to listen to the parent, he or she is really strict with children. Maybe even the child is convinced of it, because his or her parents sound tough and even seem to be frequent about physical punishment. But when it really comes to a crunch, a crucial decision, the parents are "soft," that is the child is able to get away with almost everything. Parents who are "hard/soft" will defend their children against any outsider, including the school, the police, or even relatives. If a teacher gives an assignment that a child doesn't like and makes an excuse to parents about why the grade was poor, this type of parent may blame the teacher for being unreasonable. If the child is arrested, it is really somebody else's fault. Not to say that critical teachers, police, and relatives are always right; of course they are not.

What the child needs is love. Children need to learn when they are young that they cannot get everything they want. Maybe Christmas is the first place to learn this. If the child gives parents a long shopping list, maybe the best thing to get is a little bit from the list and some other things that parents know the child needs.

Maybe the most dramatic situation occurs when two parents disagree about how a child should be treated.

### The pastor speaks

Any child naturally will try to play the parents off against one another. Daddy, can I go across the road to play with Johnny? Ask your mother. Mommy, can I go play? Sure. A few years later, Mommy, can I have a car for my sixteenth birthday? Ask your daddy. Daddy, if I get a car then you won't have to take me places and I won't have to ride all over the county with my friends.

Of course, if parents separate or divorce as so many do these days, a child who has learned to play upon the divisions between parents will be able to get almost anything.

So that all the children and teenagers I work with will not use my picute for a dartboard, I need to say also that the tragedy is the harm to the children. Not only is their moral sense withered, but in many cases the parent has given them so many things in order to avoid giving them the thing they need most--which is probably time. And I mean Daddy's time every bit as much as Mommy's. Take the child with you when you work in the garden. Take him with you when you go into the woods. What are you doing by yourself that you don't want the child to know about? I have not tried to suggest "how terrible young people are these days." I don't believe that--I think most children and teenagers are fine people--but they need leadership and time from their parents. "Hard/soft" is wrong twice, probably too hard and too soft.

## Stratton wins FFA award

Dennis Stratton, an Appomattox County High School junior, has been named area winner of the Future Farmers of America Foundation award for forest management. Dennis, 17, is the son of Mr. and Mrs. John H. Stratton, RFD 3, Appomattox.

The proficiency award for forestry is a special project of the National FFA Foundation sponsored by the Weyerhaeuser Company Foundation.

Beginning with a sizable project in 1976, Dennis has practiced intensive forestry throughout his enrollment in agricultural education. His career objective is to become an instructor of agricultural education.


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